

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR

BEAVER LAKE

FISHING ACCESS SITE

March, 2000



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

Flathead

DRAFT

MEPA/NEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action:** Construct a boat ramp and mitigate for the common loon nesting sites.
2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). Parks Division.
3. **Name of Project:** Beaver Lake Fishing Access Site.
4. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency):**
5. **If Applicable:**

Estimated Construction/Commencement Date: Fall 2000
Estimated Completion Date: Fall 2001
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): 5%
6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township):**
Flathead County, Sec. 22, T. 31 N., R. 22 W.
7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**
 - (a) Developed:
residential ___ acres
industrial ___ acres
 - (b) Open Space/Woodlands/
Recreation 2 Acres
 - (c) Wetlands/Riparian
Areas ___ acres
 - (d) Floodplain ___ acres
Approximately
 - (e) Productive:
irrigated cropland acres
dry cropland acres
forestry acres
range land acres
acres other acre
8. **Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.**

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project Including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

Beaver Lake, a 106 acre lake with a maximum depth of 110 feet, is located 4 miles west and north of Whitefish, Montana. It is accessed via US 93, approximately 6 miles west of Whitefish and 4½ miles northeast over gravel roads (Appendix A-1 – A-4).

In 1984 the only public access to Beaver Lake, through private land, was posted and gated off to public use. In April 1986, working with The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), FWP acquired a lease for two acres of land with road access. The lease has been renewed as needed.

The east side of Beaver Lake is privately owned, with the remaining lake shore owned by DNRC. DNRC has designed an 18-lot development for lakefront lots for cabin site construction on the northwest side of the lake, and two lots adjacent to and east of the existing FWP access site (Appendix A-2). All the lots are leased, and the majority of them have been developed. While it is not known how many motor boats are owned by the cabin owners, it is known that two larger boats are used for water skiing.

The access road, turnaround, and parking areas were constructed in 1987. However, it appeared that the road and turnaround profile had been elevated uniformly 3-4 feet, not in accordance with the plans and specifications. Therefore, the turnaround is located approximately 10 -15 feet above the level of the lake. This makes access to the water difficult, as users have to drag their boats down to the water and, even more difficult, drag them back up to the road level.



View from water edge up toward the turnaround. Photo by Wayne Worthington. July 27, 1999.



View from upper parking lot toward the turnaround. Photo by Wayne Worthington. July 27, 1999.

The proposal is to develop a concrete ramp from the end of the present turnaround down to the water's edge.

Public use of the site has increased in more recent years. Many users have complained about the inability to back their boats down to the water and have requested that FWP develop a boat ramp. When the site was designed, a boat ramp was included in the design for development in the future (Appendix A-3).

Records indicate that annually, 2,412 to 6,786 angler days were spent on the lake from 1982 to 1984, when the access road and ramp on private land was closed. From 1985 through 1989, Beaver Lake saw from 372 to 857 annual angler days. This reduction is due to the loss of boat access. From 1991 through 1993, Beaver Lake hosted from 1,289 to 1,400 annual anglers days. This was attributed to excellent ice fishing. From 1995 through 1997, there were 220 to 742 annual angular days.

Parking is presently available for approximately eight vehicles with boat trailers. Construction of the ramp may decrease parking space and, therefore, pose a limited possibility for an increase in the numbers of users on the lake.

In the late 1950s, the Beaver Lake fishery succumbed to an illegal planting of red side shiners and pumpkinseeds. In 1961 the lake was chemically treated to eliminate these undesirable fish and planted with rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, and a few brook trout. Kokanee salmon have recently been planted. The last planting occurred in 1999. The waters are managed primarily for rainbow trout. More recently, fathead minnows were illegally introduced into the lake. They

have become very abundant and compete with the young trout for food and space.

There is presently a no wake restriction on the lake from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. and from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

According to Montana Heritage Program, common loons successfully nested and produced two chicks in 1995 and one chick in 1999. Common loons are a species of special concern in Montana and a Priority 1 species according to the state's Bird Conservation Plan. These birds need relatively undisturbed nesting areas on lakeshores, particularly during May and June, when they establish the nest site and incubate the eggs. Last year in June, biologists learned that anglers were inadvertently, but frequently, flushing the adults off the nest site located in the north bay area. To reduce these impacts, the biologists placed floating signs 100-150 feet from the nest site to warn boaters. This was the first year signs had been used; it appears they may have helped with nesting success. Loon information signs were also placed around the lake, letting users know loons occur on this lake.

10. Listing of any other local, state, or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation. (DNRC) 2250 Hwy. 93 North Kalispell, MT 59901-2557	# L-2956	April 11, 1986

(b) Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
FWP	\$25,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
DNRC	Permit Administration

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact be Mitigated	Commen t Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X		Yes	1b
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?			X		Yes & No	1d
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

1b. Some trees will be removed and rocks, soil, and gravel moved to form a stable foundation for a concrete boat ramp. This will create some disruption of the natural condition of the existing area. The banks of the ramp will be vegetated with appropriate vegetation to reduce and eliminate soil erosion. The concrete ramp will be an aid to eliminate erosion and siltation into the lake.

1d. Any construction, public use, and construction of a structure into and adjacent to a body of water will create some erosion and siltation to that body of water during the construction period. The construction area will be vegetated, and the concrete surface of the ramp will help eliminate a major portion of erosion and siltation; however, some minor siltation may still occur.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))		x				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		x				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		x				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		x				
e. For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a)		x				
f. Other _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Air Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?			x		No	3a
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		x				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood water or other flows?		x				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		x				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		x				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		x				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		x				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		x				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		x				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		x				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		x				
l. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c)						
m. <u>For P-R/D-J</u> , will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a)						
n. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Water Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

3a. Use of a concrete ramp will eliminate most siltation. There will be a slight discharge into the lake whenever it rains. The amount will be so small that it will not significantly impact water quality or turbidity.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

4. <u>VEGETATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		x				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		x				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		x				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		x				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			x		Yes	4d
f. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?						
g. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

4d. Noxious weeds may germinate after the ramp is constructed. A weed control program is established in the FWP program to manage noxious weeds. This program will be extended to this site.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		x				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?				x	Yes	5c
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?				x	Yes	5f
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			x		Yes	5g
h. For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f)						
i. For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d)						
j. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

5c.f. Additional large motorboats, personal watercraft, and other related water uses could have an increasingly adverse effect on the nesting common loons on the lake. It is thought that high levels of recreational use, particularly at historic levels (when the access was better), could impact common loon nesting success. FWP and DNRC are implementing actions to mitigate recreational impacts to nesting loons through a number of measures to insure the lake remains suitable for nesting. DNRC will be notifying Beaver Lake lease holders about the nesting loons and the effects boating can have on them. Additionally, DNRC has committed to posting loon information signs and using floating nest signs to protect the loon nesting site. DNRC will also be lead in monitoring Beaver Lake each spring and summer to evaluate the loon program. Depending on nesting success using these measures, additional measures might be needed to insure nesting can continue. FWP is currently going through a motorboat rule-making process which might restrict watercraft near shore. Depending on the outcome of the new rules, additional mitigation may be necessary. Additional steps could include a voluntary no-wake zone in the bay where the nest is located. Or, if needed, FWP could pursue a regulatory no-wake zone rule in the bay to protect the loon nesting site. Another mitigating measure, if needed, might include changes in fishing regulations.

5g. The addition of a boat ramp will increase recreational use on the lake, which may impact nesting waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland or shoreline species. There is presently a no-wake restriction on the lake from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. and again from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. FWP is presently going through the rule-making process with respect to motor craft on all Montana's waters. The effect of the boat ramp on near shore use of habitat by wildlife could be mitigated by these new rules.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			x		No	6a
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?			x		Yes	6b
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		x				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		x				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

6a & 6b. The noise levels associated with boats and people will increase due to improved access and expected increased use on the lake.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		x				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		x				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		x				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		x				
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		x				
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		x				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)						
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		x				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		x				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		x				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		x				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			x		No	9e
f. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

9e. Use will increase on the access road due to the new boat ramp; however, it is not anticipated that this will cause any adverse impacts. Access to the leased cabin sites, except two not presently developed, does not occur over this access road.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		x				
b. Have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		x				
c. Result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		x				
d. Result in increased used of any energy source?		x				
e. Define projected revenue sources		x				
f. Define projected maintenance costs.		x				
g. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		x				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		x				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c)						
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		x				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		x				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		x				
d. For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a)						
e. Other: _____						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed):

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)			x		Possible	13a
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		x				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		x				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		x				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?			x		No	13e
f. For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e)						
g. For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.						

Narrative Description and Evaluation of the Cumulative and Secondary Effects on Land Resources (Attach additional pages of narrative if needed): 13.g-A 310 permit will be required from the County Conservation District.

13a. There are some seven or eight environmental impacts that could cumulatively have an adverse effect on the present situation at this site. However, all of these impacts could be eliminated or drastically reduced if proper construction guidelines, regulations, and monitoring systems were set up and properly managed.

13e. It is expected that substantial debate will come from the cabin leaseholders on the north side of the lake. There has been very limited public access to this lake for approximately 15 years, and it is anticipated that some of the leaseholders will want to maintain this privacy. More important than the homeowners' concern for privacy is the protection of the loon population. This could be accomplished through proper signing, monitoring, and if necessary, regulations, with or without the establishment of a new boat ramp.

2. **Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternative would be implemented.**

Alternative A: No Action. The boat ramp would not be constructed. Public access to the lake would continue to require skidding small boats down and back up the bank to access the water for recreation activities. Public use would probably remain about the same. As more cabins are built, private users to a public body of water will have almost exclusive use of this public recreation facility.

Alternative B: Construct a boat ramp to accept boats of sizes associated with lakes of this size. Build a boat ramp. Due to site location, this ramp will probably be user-friendly for boats less than 16'. Mitigate for the common loon nesting habitat by use of floating signs, information signs, public education, and possibly additional regulation. Make regulations apply to all users of the water. Create as little environmental damage as possible during the construction period. Use concrete for the boat ramp.

Alternative C: Construct a skid, ramp, trolley rail, or some other device so that small boats can be off-loaded and slid down to the lake, and later cranked back up the slide. Such a device can be constructed from wood and, with a winch with the proper gear ratio, can launch small boats from the higher elevation into the water. Less ground disturbance, fewer tree removals, and better rehabilitation of ground disturbances will create less environmental problems during and after the construction is completed. Vegetation and shrubs can be planted which will aid in the restoration of the site. Provide adequate signing for protection of the common loon and post regulations as they pertain to this site and body of water.

Preferred Alternative: Alternative B.

3. **Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

Special mitigation measures to protect common loons shall be implemented. These include education, monitoring, appropriate signs at lake access points, floating signs around nest sites, and voluntary or enforceable no-wake regulations.

4. **Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? YES / NO If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:**

No, an EIS is not required. Although substantial controversy may exist, it is based on social issues. Resource impacts to loons can be mitigated through design, education, and, if necessary, regulation. An EA is all that is necessary to establish the proper methods and mitigation measures necessary to properly manage this resource.

5. **Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any; and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?**

At least one public hearing will be scheduled. Legal advertisement will be placed in local newspaper, and a 30-day comment period will be allowed. An additional public hearing will be held if necessary.

6. Duration of comment period if any:

Thirty days.

7. Name, title, address and phone number of the Person(s) Responsible for Preparing the EA:

Wayne B. Worthington, Consultant
Landscape Architect
365 Summit Ridge Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901
Tel. No. (406) 752-2916

PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

1b. Some trees will be removed and rocks, soil, and gravel moved to form a stable foundation for a concrete boat ramp. This will create some disruption of the natural condition of the existing area. The banks of the ramp will be vegetated with appropriate vegetation to reduce and eliminate soil erosion. The concrete ramp will be an aid to eliminate erosion and siltation into the lake.

1d. Any construction, public use, and construction of a structure into and adjacent to a body of water will create some erosion and siltation to that body of water during the construction period. The construction area will be vegetated, and the concrete surface of the ramp will help eliminate a major portion of erosion and siltation; however, some minor siltation may still occur.

3a. Use of a concrete ramp will eliminate most siltation. There will be a slight discharge into the lake whenever it rains. The amount will be so small that it will not significantly impact water quality or turbidity.

4a. Some trees, shrubs, and grass will be removed in order to construct the boat ramp. Side slopes will be revegetated to reduce and eliminate erosion.

4d. Noxious weeds may germinate after the ramp is constructed. A weed control program is established in the FWP program to manage noxious weeds. This program will be extended to this site.

5c.f. Additional large motorboat, personal watercraft, and other related water uses could have an increasing adverse effect on the nesting common loons on the lake. It is thought that high levels of recreational use, particularly at historic levels (when the access was better), could impact common loon nesting success. FWP and DNRC are implementing actions to mitigate recreational impacts to nesting loons through a number of measures to insure the lake remains suitable for nesting. DNRC will be notifying Beaver Lake lease holders about the nesting loons and the effects boating can have on them. Additionally, DNRC has committed to posting loon information signs and using floating nest signs to protect the loon nesting site. DNRC will also be lead in monitoring Beaver Lake each spring and summer to evaluate the loon program. Depending on nesting success using these measures, additional measures might be needed to insure nesting can continue. FWP is currently going through a motor-boat rule-making process which might restrict watercraft near shore. Depending on the outcome of that process and the results of loon monitoring and education, FWP may need to further restrict boat activities around the nesting site or in the bay area. These additional measures could be voluntary or regulatory.

5g. The addition of a boat ramp will increase recreational use on the lake, which may impact nesting waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland or shoreline species. There is presently a no-wake restriction on the lake from 5 a.m. to 10 a.m. and again from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. FWP is presently going through the rule-making process with respect to motor craft on all Montana's waters. The effect of the boat ramp on near shore use of habitat by wildlife could be mitigated by these new rules.

6a & 6b. As use increases the noise level will increase due to more public recreation and boats or other water craft using the lake.

9e. Use will increase on the access road due to the new boat ramp; however, it is not anticipated that this will cause any adverse impacts. Access to the leased cabin sites, except two not presently developed, does not occur over this access road.

13a. There are some seven or eight environmental impacts that could cumulatively have an adverse effect on the present situation at this site. However, all of these impacts could be eliminated or drastically reduced if proper construction guidelines, regulations, and monitoring systems were set up and properly managed.

13e. It is expected that substantial debate will come from the cabin leaseholders on the north side of the lake. There has been very limited public access to this lake for approximately 15 years, and it is anticipated that some of the leaseholders will want to maintain this privacy. More important than the homeowners' concern for privacy is the protection of the loon population. This could be accomplished through proper signing, monitoring, and if necessary, regulations, with or without the establishment of a new boat ramp.